

a protection saying the Federal Government may not punish any individual or entity based on a religious or moral conviction-based belief about marriage. That is not too much to ask.

If you ask any American citizen whether that was reasonable, shoot, if you ask any Member of this body in public whether that is fair and reasonable, I think they would have to say yes because it is.

When legislation goes through this body and through this Congress in the proper way, we have a better chance of ironing out these details, of making sure that we are not expanding the zone of protected rights and interests of some at the expense of others. We do that pretty well.

Mr. President, you and I serve together on the Judiciary Committee. That is the committee of jurisdiction for legislation like this. This legislation should have gone through the Judiciary Committee, and yet we have not held a single hearing on it. We have not marked up this bill in Judiciary. We haven't independently voted on this bill in the Judiciary Committee.

In fact, it hasn't been through any committee process in the Senate that I am aware of. If it had, you know the kind of work we would have run it through, the kind of work we would have put into it, and the kind of carefully crafted language we could have produced as a result of it.

I am confident we could have and would have and definitely should have worked this out in committee had we had the opportunity to do so.

This legislation bypassed committees. Sometimes that happens. I understand that it happens from time to time. It is usually a very unfortunate thing when it does. But when it does, it does not excuse us from the obligation to try to replicate that process by at least making sure that we are not harming other people outside the immediate zone of intended protected beneficiaries of the legislation in question. That is all I am asking for here, and it isn't too much to ask.

States and the Federal Government can, and surely will, continue to recognize the validity of same-sex marriages, and they can do so without trampling on the First Amendment rights of those who believe in traditional marriage.

That is what it means to live in a pluralistic society. That is what it means to live in a society where we respect each other's differences, we allow each other to be who we are, live as we choose to live. That can't be done unless we allow each other to believe as we believe and not retaliate against others simply because they believe differently than we do.

Americans of good faith can continue to live by their own religion and daily life by living as they do and doing so without posing any threat to those who disagree with them. I am confident of that. But this bill does not strike that balance. It purports to do so, and it fails.

It labels people of good faith as bigots and subjects them to endless harassing litigation and discrimination and threats by that same government that was founded to protect their religious liberty.

Let's do this the right way, not the wrong way. We need to protect religious freedom. This bill doesn't do that. It places it in grave jeopardy. Let's fix the problem.

Mr. LEE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we continue to work on an agreement on the marriage equality bill. If we do not reach agreement, the vote on the motion to proceed will occur at approximately 10 p.m. this evening, so Members should stay close by.

NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 848, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 848) designating the week beginning October 16, 2022, as "National Character Counts Week".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no further debate, the question is on adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 848) was agreed to.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions introduced earlier today: S. Res. 839, S. Res. 840, S. Res. 841, S. Res. 842, S. Res. 843, S. Res. 844, S. Res. 845, S. Res. 846, and S. Res. 847.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate pro-

ceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MISSISSIPPI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 800 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 800) celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; the Hyde-Smith amendment at the desk to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 800) was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 6484) to the preamble was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

In the second clause of the preamble, strike "lobbying" and insert "advocacy".

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 800

Whereas the American Farm Bureau was created in 1919 to disseminate college research results to farmers;

Whereas, since 1919, the American Farm Bureau has since grown into one of the strongest advocacy organizations in the United States, with 6,000,000 members and affiliated services and member benefits that include highly respected insurance companies;

Whereas the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation was officially chartered on October 30, 1922, in Jackson, Mississippi, as a proud state affiliate of the American Farm Bureau;

Whereas C.L. Neill of Jones County was elected as the first president of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation;

Whereas the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation is a strong voice of agriculture for farmers, ranchers, and rural Mississippians;